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A vessel, fill'd to brim with shame and woe,
 Varnish'd with glitt'ring waters to allure,
 Distill'd of malice, virtue's direst foe
 Its touch unclean, defilement to the pure.

I am unworthy of the saving love
 Thou hast to me Thy servant ever shown,
 So must I waft my song of praise above,
 And unto Thee my gratitude make known.

My soul, Thy gift divine, was pure as light ;
 Alas ! no more, my sin hath stain'd its crest.
 I wrestled with the Yezer Ra¹ in might,
 But all too weak I sank—yet not to rest.

Contrite, Thy saving pardon I entreat,
 I feel Thy glory flood my yearning soul ;
 Vanquish'd proud sin is helpless at my feet,
 And I, Thy servant, reach Thy radiant goal.

ELSIE DAVIS.

FROM THE HEBREW "DIVAN" OF R. JUDAH HALEVI.

I.—TO ZION.

Hast thou no greeting for thy captive sons,
 Poor remnant of thy flock, who seek thy weal ?
 "Peace to thee, far and near !" Lift up thy voice
 Through all thy region—west, east, north, and south !
 And "Peace" to me, Hope's prisoner, who sheds [Zech. ix. 12.
 His tears like Hermon's dew, and only longs
 That they might fall (where dews fall) on thy hills.
 Thy woe-gone state I wail with jackal cry,
 But, should I dream captivity restored,
 I am a harp, to echo forth thy songs.
 For Bethel and Peni-ël how I yearn !
 For Mahanaim, and each trysting-spot
 Where angels met thy pure saints of old :
 There the Shekinah neighboured close with thee,

¹ The evil imagination.

And He that formed thee set thy open gates
Hard by the open gates of highest heaven.
The glory of the Lord thy only light !
Not sun, or moon, or stars that lightened thee !
May it be mine to shed my life-blood there,
Where on thy sons God's spirit erst was shed.
Thou home of kingship ! throne of God !—Ah ! woe,
That slaves now sit upon thy lordly thrones !
Oh, might I range through spots where seer and sage
Received for thee the unveiled speech of God !
Oh, had I wings, that I might fly afar,
And soothe the serried cares of this poor heart
Amid the serried range of Bether's hills, [Cant. ii. 17.
I'd fall upon my face upon thy soil,
I'd find sweet pleasure in thy very stones,
And cherish to my heart thy merest dust ;
Much more when standing by my fathers' graves,
Lost in deep wonder, there where Hebron holds
The dearest even of thy sepulchres.
I pass, in thought, through forest and through field ;
I stand in awe by Gilead and the hills
Which tower round thy borders—Nebo first—
Mount Nebo and Mount Hor—most sacred they,
Where “two great Lights” thy lights and teachers shone.
Thy very air breathes life into the soul !
Thy smallest dust more sweet than sweetest myrrh !
Thy streams run honey from the dripping rocks !
How sweet it were to walk with naked foot
Through ruins that were once God's oracles !
’Twas here thy ark was treasured, here thy cherubim
Once dwelt within this inmost shrine of thine.
I shave my head—cast down its beauty's crown,
And curse the fate that, in an unclean land,
Profanes the beauty of thy Nazarites. [Lam. iv. 7.
What pleasure can I find in food or drink,
While those that are but dogs can rend thy lions ?
How can the light of day gladden mine eyes,
That see crows gnaw the carcase of thine eagles ?
Oh, cup of woe ! Give pause ! give breathing-space !
My reins and soul are full of bitterness. [Job ix. 18
I think on Ahôlah—I drink thy cup ;
On Ahôlibah—then I drain its dregs. [Ezek. xxiii
O Zion, “perfect beauty,” grace, and love

Of old thou bindest on thee—yea, the souls
 Of sages, too, are bound up in thy life.
 These gladden in thy weal, these wail thy woe,
 These weep thy ruin. Still, from captive pit,
 Towards thee they yearn, and towards thy sacred gates
 Each from his place they bow them down in prayer.
 Thy bleating flocks, though captive and dispersed
 From mount to hill, can ne'er forget thy Fold :
 Still to thy skirts they cling and strive to climb
 Up to the stately palm-growth of thy breasts. [Cant. vii. 9.
 Shinar and Patros ? Can *they* match thy state ?
 Their vanities thy Urim and thy Thummim ?
 Thy Princes—Prophets—Levites—Minstrels ?
 To each of these what can the world compare ?
 The diadem of every worldly throne
 Must change and pass away—thy wealth remains ;
 Thy crown of consecration is for aye ;
 Thy God desires thee for His Throne. Ah, blest
 Is “he whom God shall choose and draw him nigh”
 That he may dwell for ever in thy Courts ;
 And “Blessèd he who waits” till he attain [Dan. xii. 12.
 To see thy light mount up, thy Dawn break forth,
 To witness peace upon thy chosen ones,
 To gladden in thy joy as thou return
 Unto the vigour of thine ancient youth.

II.

Oh, fairest joy of Earth,
 Thou City of the King,
 For thee my soul is home-sick,
 A banished Westerling !
 Compassion stirs my bowels
 When calling back the past ;
 Thy Glory that is captive !
 Thy beauty that is waste !
 Oh, had I wings of eagles
 I'd seek thee, nor refrain
 Till tears had poured upon thee
 And watered thee like rain :
 I'd seek thee, though thy King
 Is now no more in thee,

Though dragon, asp, and scorpion,
Take place of Gilead's tree ;
Thy very stones I'd cherish
And lovingly embrace,
Sweeter to me than honey
Thy broken clods should taste.

III.—THE VOYAGE.

Thine is my soul, O God. In hope or fear
To Thee it bows and yields incessant praise.
In Thee I joy when carried to and fro ;
To Thee give thanks in all my pilgrimage.
When the ship spreads her stork-like wings to fly, [Zech.
When deep makes roar to lower deep, and moans— [v. 9.
As if it learn'd that sorrow from my heart—
It makes the ocean like a caldron seethe ;
It makes the deep sea like a wizard's pot.

* * *

When teeming creatures seem to ban the ship,
Sea-monsters waiting for their coming meal !
A time of anguish like to first-born throes
With children at the birth—no strength to bear !
Should I lack food?—the sweetness of Thy name
Is in my mouth the best viaticum.
Nor shall I care for buying or for building,
For “get or gain,” or any loss that haps ;
I even learn to leave my daughter dear,
The darling of my soul, though she to me
Is dear as only child can only be.
I can forget her son—That rends my heart !
No poem comes without the thought of him !
Fruit of my body ! child of my delight !
Can Judah e'er by Judah be forgot !
Yet this I count but dross for love of Thee ;
That I might come within Thy gates with praise ;
There would I stay and reckon this my heart
As a whole-offering on Thine Altar bound.
I'd make my grave within Thy Holy Land
There to remain, a witness to my love.

IV.—THE EARTH IN SPRING.

Then, day by day, her brodered gown
 She changes for fresh wonder ;
 A rich profusion of gay robes
 She scatters all around her.
 From day to day her flowers' tints
 Change quick, like eyes that brighten,
 Now white, like pearl, now ruby-red,
 Now emerald-green they'll lighten.
 She turns all pale ; from time to time
 Red blushes quick o'er-cover ;
 She's like a fair, fond bride that pours
 Warm kisses on her lover.
 The beauty of her bursting spring
 So far exceeds my telling,
 Methinks sometimes she pales the stars
 That have in heaven their dwelling.

V.—DIVAN NO. 52.—A PRAYER.

O God ! before Thee lies my whole desire,
 Although it find no utterance on my lips.
 One moment of Thy will—then let me die !
 Ah, would that this request of mine might come !
 The rest of life I would yield up to Thee,
 And sleep the sleep that should be sweet to me.
 Absent from Thee, my very life is death,
 But could I cleave to Thee, then death were life.
 But I know not the "wherewithal to come," [Mic. vi. 6.
 Or what should be my service and my work.
 "Teach me Thy ways, O Lord,"
 And from my folly's bondage bring me home.
 Teach me while yet I have some power left
 To make amends, and spurn not mine affliction.
 Ere that day comes when I must be a burden,
 When my last end lies heavy on mine end,
 And I must bow, unwilling, while slow waste
 Consumes my strength, too weary to uprise ;
 And so I go whither my fathers went,
 Dwelling where they themselves are dwelling now.
 Stranger am I and pilgrim *on* this earth,

Only beneath the sod my heritage !
So far my youthful days have had their will.
Ah ! when shall I myself, too, have *my* will ?
That "world" which he "hath set within my heart" [Eccles.
He hath refused to let me seek as end. [iii. 2.
How can I serve my Maker while I am
Bound by my evil, slave of my desires ?
How shall I aim at any high emprise,
That am to-morrow "sister to the worm" ?
How should my heart gladden at any good,
Whereas I know not what may hap to-morrow ?
The days and nights are busily engaged
In wasting me away, till I be gone !
One half of me they scatter to the winds,
The other half they bring again to dust.
What shall I say ? My evil tracks me down,
A stern foe from the cradle to the grave.
What share have I in time, except Thy will ?
If Thou be not my lot, what lot have I ?
Spoiled of all merit, robbed and naked left,
Thy righteousness alone must cover me.
Yet why should I tell out my prayer in words ?
O God, before Thee lies my whole desire !

EDWARD G. KING.
